United Nations A/C.1/61/PV.17

General Assembly
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Official Records

First Committee
17th meeting
Thursday, 19 October 2006, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairperson: Mrs. Juul ..... (Norway)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 82 to 97 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairperson: This morning we will first allow the four remaining speakers to address the panellists, who were generous enough to again allocate some time in their busy schedules to the Committee. I shall also give an opportunity to those delegations that wish to introduce draft resolutions to do so. Afterwards, we will have a follow-up of draft resolutions adopted by the Committee at its previous session, including the presentation of a report by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, which will immediately be followed by presentations on issues pertaining to nuclear weapons and small arms and light weapons by representatives of four non-governmental organizations. All of those discussions will proceed in an informal mode. If time permits, the Committee will also continue with its thematic discussion on the remaining subjects and the introduction of draft resolutions.

I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/61/L.1 and A/C.1/61/L.2.

Mr. Shamaa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt supports efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in order to achieve our goals of nuclear non-proliferation. Egypt also supports and calls for universality for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), so as to achieve the Treaty's goals and strengthen the non-proliferation regime that has been established. In that context, our country would like to intensify efforts to ensure that the six-party talks regarding the Korean Peninsula result in the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone there. We also call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fulfil its non-proliferation obligations and place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On behalf of the member States of the League of Arab States, the delegation of Egypt would like to introduce the draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", document A/C.1/61/L.2. This draft resolution aims at strengthening the system established by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to prevent its collapse. It underscores the dangers of the existence of nuclear installations in the Middle East that are not under the IAEA safeguards regime. It also calls upon Israel to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, so as to achieve the universality of the Treaty in the Middle East and strengthen peace and security in the Middle East. Our hope is that all countries and States support the NPT and work to realize the goal of international peace, stability and security in the Middle East.

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In order to achieve the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, we would also like to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", document A/C.1/61/L.1. This draft resolution calls for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We wish to emphasize the need for the parties involved to take the necessary steps to remove all nuclear weapons from the Middle East and to place all nuclear activities in the region under the IAEA safeguards regime. The draft resolution also calls upon all States, pending the establishment of the zone, not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or permit the stationing of such weapons on their territories.

Our efforts are motivated by the belief that the grave challenges associated with the NPT system are such that we need to take immediate and effective steps to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We therefore once again call upon all States, especially those that are responsible for promoting international peace and security, to take concrete steps to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, for that is a goal that all Member States share. We hope that consensus will continue and be further strengthened.

The Chairperson: I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/61/L.40.

Mrs. Martinic (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/61/L.40, entitled "Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms", on behalf of the delegations listed in that document and those that have become sponsors since last Wednesday. As members will recall, the Argentine initiative to introduce this draft resolution is part of an effort to relaunch the dialogue on this issue that began during the 2000, 2001 and 2003 substantive sessions of the Disarmament Commission.

Resolutions 59/92 and 60/82, regarding information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms, were adopted with consensus and were co-sponsored by 105 delegations. That voluntary display of approval illustrates the broad support generated by the subject. In accordance with paragraph 4 of those resolutions, the Secretary-General has established an electronic database containing information provided by Member States to the Department for Disarmament Affairs. Draft resolution A/C.1/61/L.40 therefore reflects that fact, while also welcoming the establishment of the database. It also calls upon the Secretary-General to keep the database updated.

In addition, in an effort to continue to promote the rationalization of the work of the First Committee, the draft resolution decides to biennialize the consideration of this draft resolution.

Argentina would once again like to express its gratitude for the wide support given to this initiative. We call on all delegations to consider becoming sponsors of the draft resolution. We hope that it will once again be adopted by consensus.

The Chairperson: We will now allow the remaining speakers to address our panellists. I now suspend the meeting in order that we may proceed with an interactive discussion in an informal mode.

The meeting was suspended at 10.25 a.m. and resumed at 1 p.m.

The Chairperson: There seems to be no time left for the Committee to continue its thematic debate today. I therefore propose to adjourn the meeting. The Committee will move on to its thematic discussion on all remaining issues, including the introduction of related draft resolutions and decisions, tomorrow. I am aware that many delegations have now waited for several days to speak and introduce draft resolutions. I thank them for their patience and wish to assure them that their turn will come tomorrow. I will, however, need the assistance of members: the more concise their statements are, the better the chances that indeed everyone will have an opportunity to speak tomorrow.

I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to make a brief announcement.

Mr. Sareva (Secretary of the First Committee): Just a reminder, again, that there will be a meeting this afternoon at 4 p.m. in Conference Room A for interested delegations. We will have informal consultations on the issue of the development of the First Committee website.

The Chairperson: The Committee will meet again tomorrow at 10 a.m. sharp in Conference Room 4.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.